3:Maah E-5 (1964-1965)1967
NV9 Tzeltal NV9
[P.464-A] Teklum

682 683 627 to who did it. The consultations with curers prior to the death of the supposed victims of a witch will be introduced as evidence. (Some degree of consensus may have been built up beforehand, in witch-killings, by the public broadcast of accusations noted above.[8]) The focus of the discussion is not so much on who killed the dead man, but whether he was indeed a witch. This kind of mock trial occurs after every funeral, since it must be decided [753] who caused the sickness. Emotions run very high as the liquor is passed around, and accusa- [152] [273] tions are made, sometimes against those present. It was after a funeral that one man killed his son (not included in Table 1) for accusing him of having caused the death of the son's child, who was being buried.

682 [521] In the weeks following a homicide, it is discussed at all the drinking sessions in the homes or in the town hall. Eventually an authoritative version begins to emerge. Those who have defended the victim then keep silent, and the 682 683 affair "rests in peace." Avenging the death of a man judged to have been a witch, so far as I [627] know, has never been done. In one case (no. 36, Table 1) the widow of a man killed as a witch vigorously denied the legitimacy of the act and built up a case against the killer. She spread word that it was without doubt the dead man's son by a prior marriage. When the son was killed shortly after (case 37, Table 1), everyone assumed that he had been killed by the widow's son by *her* prior marriage. However, the authoritative version concerning the second killing was that it was an accident: he had been mistaken for his brother, whom the killer was after because of rivalry over a girl.

682 183 *Rules for Surviving*

The patterning of the selection of victims and the circumstances of homicide provide the basis for formulating a set of rules that can 682 ensure survival. The long-range rules of sur- 539 vival, in the words of an elder at the occasion of 183 the death of his godchild, are:

lakan kak'o ta kuenta me'lal
I pay respect to my elders.

[601] *kun ku kihlt'in kulučan*
I greet my younger brothers and my children (classificatory extension of kinship terms).

spisil kak' ta kuenta
To all I give respect.

ha' kil lekotik. Ma taltik milo' me taltik tsimal

581 end, the husband gives a big meal sometime
574 (even 30 years later) which must be attended by the important members of the wife's
• [753] clan. Many illnesses in a family are attributed to the fact that the man did not fulfill this third requirement of a food gift (*oshe-vuelto-uaj-matz*, 'third delivery of food').

584 Another custom, known as *yajk makte achish* ('cover or secure the girl'), is practiced when the chosen girl is too young (10–12 years) to get married. To secure her in the future, the boy's parents make arrangements with those of the girl, offering them liquor that other members of the girl's clan also share. When she grows older, they proceed with the wedding arrangements and the customary formal ceremonies.

583 Another form of marriage, existing among very traditional groups, begins with the capture of the girl. This happens when she has no father or important man representing the house. The boy and his parents must obtain cooperation from one of the male members of the girl's clan. With this accomplice the men go to the girl's house at midnight, take her, and bring her to the boy's parents either by persuading her mother with liquor or by force. Days later, they try to calm the anger of the important people of her clan, bringing further bottles of liquor. Usually the union becomes formally recognized after this, and the couple settle in their own home with the neighbors' approval. It is thus a sort of institutionalized capture.

581 Among the less conservative communities,
177 these forms of marriage are being replaced
585 by Ladino forms, which regard marriage not as a contract between two lineages or families but as an agreement between two individuals. Furthermore, the Catholic ceremony
583 is considered very important. Premarital sex-
836 ual relations and elopement are frequent. Metzger states that, "in Aguacatenango, to
584 a considerable extent, the marriage choice
[836] is made by the boy and the girl after sexual experimentation and a period of 'going steady.' The boy tells his family about it and they proceed to make the arrangements

[P 218-B]

844 [757] [842] cloves, and corncake, to keep her "warm and fertile." The placenta can be burned, thrown to the dogs, or deeply buried in case the mother does not want another pregnancy soon. The umbilical cord is put under [789] a three-stone fireplace if the baby is a girl, on top of a tree if it is a boy so that he may become brave and agile when adult.

846 515 A few hours after childbirth, at the latest the next day, both mother and child take a temascal (steam bath). Some women stay in the temascal until they feel completely recovered.

Childhood and Adolescence

789 774 During the first weeks of life, children are in danger of losing their souls because their inexperience makes them an easy prey to the naguales and bad spirits who wander around. As protection, mothers place a small [237] piece of beeswax at the back of the child's head or tie, as a bracelet, a red or blue thread around the wrist. If none of these precautions are taken, the mother has to cover with branches the paths her child walks, so that his soul can easily find its way in case he loses it.

789 852 774 Because of all these dangers, fathers always try to perform the ceremony of "seed the soul of the child" as soon as possible. It [553] is during this ceremony that the child is given a name, later confirmed according to Catholic ritual at the ceremonial center. A [608] very important aspect of the ceremony is selection of the godparents.

753 776 [888] *Sickness and Death*

Most sicknesses come from infection or malnutrition. To the natives, however, illnesses have a supernatural cause and are ascribed either to the anger of gods and spirits or to old people who have a nagual or who can throw a spell. The most frequent explanation is that naguales or supernatural beings are acting against people. They can adopt human or animal form or appear as

[P.224-A]

753 776 [794] [888] [613] thunder, wind, or lightning. All the men who occupy or have occupied cargos in the political or religious organization are supposed to have a nagual, as do the older members of the lineage. They consider it their duty to punish those members of the group who have sinned and use their nagual, who can devour the soul of the victim little by little.

774 776 According to this idea, everybody has two souls: one which can be eaten by the naguales, and one which follows the destiny that its patron saint has planned for it. 761 775 776 When death comes, the naguales take away the first soul and have a banquet up in the mountains. In this feast, the naguales of the old people of the clan participate, joined by others induced to comradeship.

761 773 776 It is a widespread belief that at midyear the naguales go to a place in heaven called Atimaltik, where an old man who possesses the Book of Life lives. Since in this book he keeps account of the time each person can live, it is a source of information for the naguales, who thus can know who is close to death. When the signature of a person disappears from the book, this means that the person died.

764 People have to keep watch over the body for two days and two nights. It is placed on a wooden plank in the middle of the house after being washed or just given a change of clothes. Two candles are placed at the head. At night friends and neighbors come to keep company with the family. They play harp and guitar and drink chicha and aguardiente. At dawn, the men go home and the women remain crying near the corpse.

[613] [184] Following the ancient custom, the dead are buried near the graves of other men of the same lineage. In Cancuc, however, dead are buried inside the house.

The bottom and sides of the grave are covered with slabs to form a coffin. The corpse, bundled up in a petate, is placed inside. His clothes and other articles he may

[P. 224-B]

273*
578 YUN PLETO HA* HIC MAYUK XIWEL *A.
731
539 In order to fight without being afraid.

753 In conjunction with collateral evidence, this text provides support for the following points. One of the standing beliefs in Aguacatenango is that sickness of god /XCAMEL YU*UN TYOS/ is essentially curable. Measles is classified as such a [754] sickness. When the children die in a measles epidemic, some "witch" must be laying on further illness components which cause the death. One mode of reducing the witchcraft component in the illness is to kill the witch or witches.

754 The problem of determining who the witch(es) may be in 755 such a case as this is very difficult. The well-defined and formally correct mode is to call together several of the curers, have them pulse the patient, hear their announcement that the sick person is suffering from witchcraft and insist that they name the witch or witches. The curers are likely to go as far as to indicate that a witchcraft component is involved in the illness, but they most often are unwilling to name an individual, as their name becomes associated with their testimony and the alleged witch and his kinsmen are likely to impose severe 754 penalties on the curer. The search for the witch, then, must go on, under the force of standing beliefs as follows: Individuals in the community may be assigned a witchcraft potential on the basis of a variety of evidence. In this case the text

6: Metzger E-5 (no date) 1964 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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CHAPTER IV

DRINKING PATTERNS ASSOCIATED WITH GETTING SICK AND DYING

75 Illness is probably the least well-controlled variable in Aguacatenango planning. As such, it is a recurrent event in the lives of Aguacatenangueros, and its implications are serious.

The household, the most complex and long-enduring organizational effort of Aguacatenangueros, may be destroyed by the death of one of its adult members. Extreme illness may cause a family to close up its house and leave town altogether. Any illness is potentially a severe strain on family resources. 273* 753 [764] Drinking is intimately associated with illness: it figures in the etiology of illness; it is central in the procedures used to reduce illness as a basis for inference and action; and finally, it is an important instrument of expression of mourning [128] should the ill individual die. After a brief description of the "theory of illness" in Aguacatenango, we will show how drinking is related to this theory and to its behavioral expression.

121 that the attribute space relevant to material objects is going to be easily searchable.[1]

(3) Most theories that individuals have about causal relationships in the real world are documented by events which have already taken place. They are of the type: X is true because Y has happened; or, alternatively, since Y, then X. Garfinkel has called this the documentary method (Garfinkel n.d.). It is characteristic of the documentary method that there is hardly ever a set of past events which deny some set of infer-
121 ences the documentary method provides.[2] Thus, in Aguacatenango,
753 an epidemic stops because the witch who was causing it has been killed; if, on the other hand, the epidemic does not stop with the killing of a witch, then another witch must be responsible. Again, a sick person gets well because a curing ceremony has been performed; if he does not get well after the ceremony, then his illness must be witchcraft and the witch more powerful than
121 the curer. The documentary method is never wrong. This may be

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[1]See Conklin (1955).

[2]This characteristic of the documentary method is explicated in an experiment by Garfinkel (op. cit.). Subjects were told that they should report by phone to counselors serious problems they were experiencing. Whenever the subject thought of a question to which the counselor could answer yes or no, he was instructed to ask the question. The counselor then answered each question yes or no. The subjects were required to interpret the counselor's response. In every case the subjects were able to "make sense" out of the counselor's response. The counselors' responses were drawn from a table of random numbers.

12/ one reason most "primitive" belief systems require so much pressure before they can be brought under our documentary rules.

The beginnings of a theory of illness for Aguacatenango

In order to develop a theory of illness, one must have a way for directing the informant's attention to this domain or focus; or, alternatively, the ethnographer must be able to detect in the set of observables he has available to him, those which are, to some extent, conditioned by the salience of illness in one or another of its forms to the performers. In the present case we depend upon verbal contexts to establish relevance from the informant's point of view, and we use verbal contexts to test non-simulated performances in order to determine the salience of illness in the record of any situation we may be examining. One general measure of relevance is expressed in the Tzeltal question: /TUT LA SPAS/ "What happened to him" literally "What was he doing?" A further probe such as: /TUT+A CAMELIL YA YA*I*/ "What illness does he feel?" if it can be made relevant, is fairly likely to put the observer into the domain of illness as it is being experienced by some participant. If the illness is a non-simulated performance, further eliciting will produce further reports of states relevant in that domain. If the illness is a simulated performance, further well controlled eliciting will produce further relevant responses to

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753 the initial simulated performance. Such material, in conjunction with texts, constitutes the basis for the following survey of beliefs about illness.

753 The conditions which precede the onset of illness are many and varied. While some of them are known to be antecedent to illness in the sense that if an individual experiences one of these conditions the probability is increased that he will become ill, there are nonetheless many conditions which become diagnostic of the illness only after the individual defines himself and is defined as being ill. Types of experiences which lead the individual to anticipate illness include either becoming angry or being an object of anger; experiencing extreme fright, as when one has had dreams, or has seen the image of some malevolent non-human force (i.e., a ladino dressed in black riding a tall horse); and drinking aguardiente. These and similar experiences carry permanent associations with illness; the individual expects to become ill and often does so. Conditions which are used to explain illness only after-the-fact tend to be more properly theoretical in that they explain at once the necessary and sufficient conditions for some non-hypothetical occurrence of some disease process.

Among the after-the-fact explanations one finds statements such as, "the patient is suffering from soul loss, his soul presently residing in the Owner of the Cave's soul pool."

753 Or, "the man is suffering from malaria which he got in hot country the last time he went to the fincas." Or, "the man's spirit is being eaten by a witch, Mr. X, who is angry with him because he did not pay back the money he owed." Every after-the-fact description of antecedent conditions implies a cause and effect relation such that the cause can be manipulated so as the patient will recover from the illness. After-the-fact descriptions of the sources of disease processes are never final since they are always dependent on (a) the further development of the disease process in the patient and (b) the confirmation in the identification of the source of illness by a successful attempt to reduce the effect of the source. If manipulation of the hypothesized source reduces the illness, the diagnosis of source is concluded to be correct; if not, further source potentials are searched for.

There is relatively little explicit procedural apparatus for adding to the inventory of after-the-fact explanations, and there are relatively few devices for modifying the modes of identification of the cause of the disease process. If a change capability is built into this theory of illness in Aguacatenango, it is not easy to detect wherein it lies.[1]

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178 [1]The modes of change that we have observed in Aguacatenangueros' response to illness have involved shifts from known medical practitioners to others, where the theory remains relatively unexplicated and the results of the medical practitioner's

6: Metzger E-5 (no date) 1964 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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753 Informants report experiencing a variety of sensed states as a disease process begins. Among these are depression (mental), cough, dry throat, diarrhea, fever, vomiting, stomach ache, loss

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75 177 178 progress are used to judge the probability of opting some particular medical practitioner for a cure rather than some other. Response to illness involves the principle of exhaustion of resources. In severe illness, the family of the patient may exhaust all known medical practitioners who are thought to have sufficient knowledge and skill and also may exhaust all means for motivating curers to come and perform the cure. With the diminution of resources and exhaustion of the most proper curers, the family of the patient explores curing sources whose potential for curing may be lower, but still appreciable. Successful curing under such circumstances raises the probability that this family will use some newly successful medical practitioner sooner in the next onset of illness, that is, he will be called upon before they have exhausted their resources. The introduction of INI medical practice into Aguacatenango has been in these terms, namely, that patients and their families have turned to INI medical personnel upon the exhaustion of their resources. INI procedures have maintained a ratio of successes over failures in these curing circumstances such that they have continued to be called upon, in some cases under less extreme conditions. The ratio of successes over failures has not been so great, however, that INI is seen to be a totally satisfactory replacement for the more well established practitioners. Furthermore, INI treats only a small proportion of the total range of "illnesses" that occur in the community. INI will increase the proportion of cases it treats as it modifies the Aguacatenangueros' perception of the success'failure ratio and as it increases the classes of illness that it deals with. It may be the case that INI has at present a maximal investment in time and resources in maintaining its present range and success proportion, so future severe changes may not be expected from them. There is, however, some generalization to other INI type of curers--namely, doctors in San Cristobal. The generalization here may increase the use of doctors over curers. There is the further possibility that curers are incorporating into their theories some of the simpler strategies used by doctors. This is done so crudely that it hardly involves change of beliefs at any detailed level, but rather involves a simple increase of the inventories of medicine by means of which the curer implements his theory.

753 of appetite, swelling, headache. At this stage in the disease process, no one, least of all the patient, knows what developments of successive units of time will be like. That is, the patient may have a headache and it will disappear (that is, no longer be reported) in some successive unit of time. On the other hand, the headache may be compounded with a stomach ache in some successive unit of time, resulting in a redefinition of the disease process. Generally speaking, sensed states which occur early in the disease process and which are not divisible into other sensed states are equivalent to symptoms, whereas sensed states which occur later in the disease process and which are a sum of other sensed states may be equivalent to illnesses. Illnesses are unit characterizations of the disease process which are sufficiently contrastive with each other so that alternative strategies for reducing the illness (as a basis of inference and action) are pursued, depending upon which (identified) illness is present in any particular case.

It is at present still unclear to what degree well-defined illnesses such as /SAK *OBAL/ "tuberculosis" are defined strictly in terms of combinations of symptoms appearing through the disease process rather than in combination with the manner in which the disease process responds to the sequential curing segments, and the ultimate explanations assigned to the disease process (e.g., witchcraft). It is probably that a more adequate

753 statement would be that the names of illnesses are reflexes of all these pressures.

757 Curing strategies more or less line up with this symptom-illness distinction. The early stages of a disease process are handled by medicine, the appropriate form of which and access to which, most adults in Aguacatenango control. For example: for stomach gas, give bicarbonate soda with lime (to drink); for a cough, give boiled brown sugar (to drink); for nausea and headache give té limon. As the combination of "symptoms" increases in the later stages of a disease process, most adults lose control over knowledge of the proper array of medicines and rituals. These in turn become combinatorially more complex. It is at these later stages of the disease process that curers and doctors are called in.

756 759 Curers and doctors differ most obviously in that doctors are ladinos and curers tend to be Indians (although ladino curers are known). In addition, they deal with illnesses in sufficiently contrastive ways so that two role identifying labels must be 75 maintained. They are both recognized to be able to reduce illness (as a basis for further inference and action) by prescribing medicines that can be purchased in the pharmacy. These may be taken orally, injected, or applied as a salve. The doctor further prescribes and may himself perform some minor surgery, X-ray examinations, and other traditional Western-European

6: Metzger E-5 (no date) 1964 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Aguacatenango

273* 753 The role of drinking performances in the onset of illness

Informants report that drinking may result in illness. One can distinguish, in the case of consequent illness two rather distinct constellations of features which lead to illness. The first involves the enchanting of the aguardiente by some bad-intentioned person, a substance being inserted in the aguardiente which causes severe illness or death to the person who drinks it. The second state involves interpretation of the supposed results of drunkenness, the universal result of the consumption of aguardiente in substantial amounts.

273* 753 539 An example of the first condition appears in a text fragment of Ausencio Espinoza, as follows:

NAL PRIMERA LIHKE YU*N LOK' TA PAXEAL HUN *AHK'BAL SOK SOTAK.

This began when he went out to party with his friends.

BAYAL XK'OKIL BA STOHIK SK'INIK SLOK'ESLAN SBILIK TA BOSINA.

There were several of them who paid for their music and they announced their names on the loud speaker.

PERO SUNUL *AHK'BAL PAXYAHIK.

They partied all night.

TA XCE'BAL K'AHAL LIHK YA'Y K'UX TA SBE YIK' MA*K SNA* STOHOL TUT *AY TE K'UX E.

The next day he began to feel a pain in his throat and he didn't understand what it was from.

BAHT TA *A*TEL.

He went to work.

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TE TA YA*TEL E MA LA X HU* YA YA*Y I TONC LA YA YA*Y TE MA*YUK SPERSE.

He went to work and he was not able to do it, for he felt very weak.

XCE*BAL K'AHAL HA* NAX HIC.

The next day he felt the same.

YOXEBAL K'AHAL HA* NAX HIC.

On the third day he felt the same.

TE*BEHTIK *UNINOT TONC HA* K'UX LI* TA SBE YIK' I.

Little by little the illness dominated him, what gave him pain was his throat.

MA SPAS XWE* SOYOK MA SPAS X KO HNUXUK SBAL XC'UHT TONC YAKB YU*UN TE ZK'UXUL SNUK' E.

He was not able to eat, and he began to grow thin for the pain in his throat.

HA* HIC LIHK XCAMEL ABI.

In this way his illness began.

TONC LIHK Z'IN PURA YA*AL TI*IL LIHK MALMUNEL HONA.

Afterwards he was spitting a lot of phlegm.

MA X MAHK LIHK *IPAHUK LEK.

It didn't stop, it got worse.

*OC TA POXTAYEL WEHT YAH*UL LA XPOXTA PURO MANBILIL POX LA YA*BE.

They began to cure him. The curer used only medicines that were purchased.

PERO MA* TOHOL CAMELUK HA* SAK *OBAL I.

But it was not a simple illness, it was tuberculosis.

273* X*OBEINAHE MA X LOK' HAL *OBAL I.
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539 When he coughed the phlegm did not come up.

HA* HIC CAM HAL KEREM BONIPASY I.

In this manner Bonifacio died.

X K'OK TA POXTAYEL TA MUK'UL *AKIL PERO MA HNA* MAC'A TE POXTAWANEH MA* TOHUB YU*N YAHCAMEL E.

He went to Pinola to cure himself. I don't know who it was that tried to cure him, but he failed.

*A LA PERSA CAM K'ALAL CAM E, BAYAL X K'OK SMUKEL.

Inevitably, he died. Many went to his funeral.

HA* Z'IN ABI YA YAL SPISIL MAC'ATIK XK'OK TA MUKAHEL I, CIKAN *AY MA*C'A LAH HAK' HOL CAMEL I, PERO MA SPAS TA HALEL MAC'A LA YAK', TA REPENTA ME LA YA*BOTIK *EHK E.

And afterward, all those who went to the funeral said, "We know who caused the illness, but we can't say who did it, for he might quickly make us ill also."

273* So, Bonifacio is reported to have been carousing with
753 his friends for the course of an evening. The specific behaviors which are mentioned include: (a) making a party (in a bar) for one night. The specific features of the party-making include: (1) paying the barkeeper to play music over the loudspeaker system; and (2) announcing their names over this same loudspeaker system. While drinking is not mentioned in the text, it is none the less the case well confirmed by informants that it is unlikely that drinking did not go on in this setting.

The next day Bonifacio went to work. In a matter of weeks Bonifacio died of tuberculosis, an illness whose etiology

273* 753 carries a strong witchcraft component. The conclusion apparent in the text is that Bonifacio was subject to this witchcraft contamination the night of the party, a point which informants confirm.

The party context, then, is one which may make the individual particularly susceptible to witchcraft. One reason for this may be that the party-goer becomes drunk and is thus less well aware of potentially threatening performances around him. A second is that he is ingesting substances (like aguardiente) the precise character of which he does not know; they being brought to the party by his companions or bought at the bar. It is a standing belief that a witch can cause trago to accept poisonous material which will kill the man who drinks it. Thus Bonifacio was killed at the party, the method being unknown (but not unlikely by using aguardiente as a medium), the killer being unknown but probably a member of the party group.

273* 753 539 A further example from text picks up a few more of the features of the drinking situation which is likely to be associated with witchcraft.

M. HINC*A, CAWAH TA HOL.
Yeah, I'm crazy in my head.

C. HAL LA STIH TRAWO *EHK I.
The trago brought that on.

273* M. 753 539

HA* MA* KA*YTIK BA* YA KUC'TIK TUT'IL *ULEMOTIK I.

We lose track of where we are drinking when we are good and drunk.

YU*N HO*N MA* KA*YIX K'OP *A, HA*WAN LA HTAIX *A HATE YU*N KUXEBAL E.

It's because I didn't obey; perhaps I got it during Holy Week.

*E LA KAK'HBA TA *ILEL TA *ORA, MANIX KAK' TA MUK' *EHK *ABI.

I tried to cure myself right away but it didn't do any good.

TONC YUN C'ABAL YA KA*Y TONC STUBI YUN LEK-*AN YA KA*Y TU*L NIX *AYINON *A.

I hear a lot of silence, and nothing is well with me as I have always been.

LIHK KA*BE XAN Z'IN HAL YUN K'IN E, HUNYO E.

I began to drink again in the fiesta in June.

YUN TE LA SAPUYONIK XAN *A TE MAC'A NIX YA YIL BIHINON *A E.

He bewitched me again, the same guy who had bothered me before.

TE LA POHOL HIL HXANAB *A, TE POHOL HIL HPOK9 *A, PERE MA*Y XC'ULEL HNUXUK.

I left my sandals lying there, my flashlight lying there, I just didn't remember a thing.

MA* BA C'IN HPAS HA*IC.

This has never happened to me before.

*OCON K'OL TA HNA Z'IN TONC BOLBOLTIKIX HBA Z'IN *A, TONC YANATIK TUTA KALIX *A TO *OCON K'OL E.

I arrived in my house afterwards half crazy. I saw things wildly strange when I got there.

273* 753 This informant relates the kind of association between his mental disturbance and the drinking of aguardiente. In this case, the disease did not stem directly from the aguardiente but from the experience he had while drinking the trago; namely that someone bewitched him. Having had the illness cured he began to drink again, which was a mistake since the witch knowing of his drunken condition, was able to cast the same spell on him again. Under this spell, his loss of consciousness was more penetrating than anything he had ever experienced as the result of drinking.

This informant reports that his ability to resist the witchcraft attack was greatly reduced while he was drinking. We speculate that such a loss of control involves the individual's loss of ability to control the alters with whom he associates, the locations he moves into, and the substances he drinks.

273* 753 539 A more specific example of the introduction of witchcraft substances into the aguardiente can be found in the text fragment of Josefa Lopez, the relevant parts of which appear in the citation below.

NAL PRIMERE LA* HTIKUN KAL TA RESAL.

It began when I sent him to Rosary.

LA KALBE BAN TA RESAL TATA, BAN *AK'A AC'IN LIMKNA ZUNA AC'IN KANTELA XKUT.

I told him, "Go to Rosary, my son, take a little candle as an offering."

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KO XCI, BAHT Z'IN.

"All right," he said, then he went.

LAH RESAL Z'IN LA STA SBA SOK XC'IN HOTAK BAHTIK TA IL K'IN.

After the Rosary, he chanced on some of his friends and they went to watch the fiesta.

YUN SK'IN ME*TIK PASKO BA YILIK BA* *AN C'IN NINO TYOS TA SNA MIGUEL MENTES.

It was the fiesta of Christ's birth and they went to see the Christ-child at the house of Miguel Mendez.

BA YILIK HU* *AHK'OT *I TE LA *ABOTIK C'IN HPIS TRAWO *A XCOLET LA TAL TE HP'IS TRAWE.

They went to watch the dance, and there my son was given a shot of aguardiente along with all of the men as the drink pourer moved around the group.

*ABOT LA Z'IN *EHUK PERO MALA KOK YU*UN TA *UC'EL.

They gave him another but he was not able to drink it.

LI* LA MAHK HIL LI*TA SNUK I.

It got stuck here in his throat.

HUN LA TA C'INIK BAK *IXIM K'ATAL HIL TA SNUK I.

It seemed as though little grains of corn were stuck in his throat.

LAH LA YO*BENTA MALA XLOK.

He coughed but it did not go away.

HA* Z'INABI K'OT YALBON *ORA *ILI LA HTAIX CAMEL.

He came home and told me that he had just got sick.

MAHNA* TY*N BON TA RESAL I LA SMONONIK TA *IL K'IN HOL HOTAK I.

"I don't know why, I went to Rosary and my friends invited me to watch the fiesta."

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• 753
539 PERO LA YA*BONIK KUC' HPIS TRAWO PERO MA* KO XCI HULEL TA HNA.

"But they gave me a shot of trago and it didn't go down," he said upon arriving home.

MATO *AK K'AHAL Z'IN *A TUHXA TA CAMEL *ABOT K'AHK'.

Not many days afterwards he fell sick with fever.

E HA Z'INABI K'AX HAL K'AHK' I, TONC MA* HAHC LIHK K'UKUBUK SNUHKLEL.

After the fever passed, he was unable to get up, his body began to ache.

LIHK YA*Y XTI*LAHAN SNUHKLEL X HUN LA TA STI*AW XANIC MALA XU* YAN LA HA YA*I.

He began to feel pain in his body as though ants were biting him and this was very depressing.

LIHK NIKOTUK TA SIK, MA*YUK SPERSA YA YA*I, TONC *IPA HONA.

He began to tremble with cold; he felt weak; he got very much worse.

BA HK'AN PAWOR SOK HME*HTATIK.

I went to ask assistance of the curers.

LA KAK'TA PIKEL XC'IC'EL LA YAL Z'IN LA YU*C' TRAWO TA BA* XK'OK TA *IL K'INE.

I let them pulse him, and afterward [the curer] said, "He drank aguardiente where he went to the fiesta."

*ABOT HPIS TRAWO YU*C' XC'IN MAHTAN, PERO *AY MA* C'A *ILOWAN LA SPAS *IL *OTAN O LA SPAS PUKUHIL.

"They gave him a shot of aguardiente as a gift, but there was someone who looked evil or who did the evil thing."

HA*HIC LA STA CAMEL C'IN KEREM I XCI.

"That is how the boy became sick," he said.

273* HA* C'OHBIL CAMEL I LOM TULAN *AY MAXU* TA HTUL YAH*UL YA
753 SK'AN CA*TUL YAH*UL HA* HIC SPAS TA POXTAYEL *A XCI HAL
539 H*UL I.

"This witchcraft is very strong, he won't get well with only one curer. He needs two curers to get well," he said.

*OC TA POXTAYEL Z'IN PERO MA*YUK HTAKIN *A.

The curer began to cure him, but I didn't have any money.

HAWAL NUHUL LO'ON TA MAHAN TA*K'IN YUN POX.

I hurried to borrow money in order to buy the medicine.

LAH TA POXTAYEL Z'IN, C'IN KALKALTIK TE*K HIL.

After the cure was over, he was a little better.

PERO HA* NAX CE* *OXE* K'AHAL I LIHK LA KUXUBUK A YA*Y LI*TA SBE YI*K I.

But only for two or three days, and then began to feel the pain in his throat.

MALA SPAS YA SBIK' YA*L STI*, MA SPAS XKO SWE*EL KUXLAHA YA*Y HONA.

He couldn't swallow his saliva, he couldn't swallow his food, it hurt so much.

MAHNATIK TU*LA XBAHT, ME XCOHP *O ME MA XCOHP.

We don't know whether he is going to get well or not.

*A YAK'WIL TA TYOS TU*LA X BAHT E.

We'll see what God says.

273* 753 Many other informants relate having narrowly escaped witchcraft by avoiding drinking from some particular bottle of trago. If the man who is drinking is very much alive to this possibility, he will be able to observe swirling hair-like ma-

273* 753 terial in the bottom of the bottle or glass. In a recent instance of this, a bottle with this alleged character was broken and the man who offered it to be drunk was beaten up.

I have not been able to determine any other substance orally ingested by means of which illness can be sent to the drinker. This may be associated with the fact that the membership of the drinking group in Aguacatenango is least well defined and hence the one where enemies are most likely to be encountered. Likewise it is the one in which aggressive performances are most likely to occur.[1]

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[1] This interpretation would have it that aguardiente becomes a physical medium by means of which the anger of the witch is transmitted to his target. Most aguardiente I have drunk has swirling hair in it; so foreign substance is not uncommon and thus available for potential interpretation. To restate the matter slightly, we may say: there is a language of aguardiente which depends upon the visual cues in examining the liquid. It is a one information bit language. The bit reads: If the aguardiente is clear when one is offered a drink, drink it and thank the drinker. If the aguardiente is "swirling-hairful," and one is offered a drink, break the glass or bottle and beat the offerer up. One general performance the drink pourer engages in on most occasions I have observed is as follows: He pours the drink into the shot glass, then examines the liquid to see if it is clean or not. If it is not clean, he will attempt to clean it by picking out the foreign substance (sticks, leaves, hair, dirt, etc.). This cleaing response may be conditioned in part by the one bit language mentioned above. (See drinking performance of ayuntamiento where this has been mentioned before.)

273* 753 **Circumstances under which the drinking of aguardiente can directly cause illness**

Not only does aguardiente in some contexts serve as medium by means of which witchcraft can be communicated, but also it has a certain disease producing potential of its own when it is taken in certain amounts within a certain time period. (The ceremonial drinking plus one or more adjacent informal drinking units.) We will now review a few of the disease processes which are interpreted as beginning immediately 273* 164 adjacent to drinking performances. The most common illness that results from drinking is a state that may be glossed as a "hangover" /GOMA, XCAMEL YU*UN TRAHO/. This is a minor illness which involves the symptoms of "headache, loss of appetite, dehydration, vomiting, diarrhea, trembling," the response to 273* 757 461 which is selected from the following alternative set. The condition of GOMA is nearly exclusive with the ability to engage in routine agricultural performances. This means that the day after a ceremonial drinking plus informal drinking segment, a man does not work. He has the choice, then, of staying around the house or leaving the house to perform some minor tasks such as gathering poles to support chayote vines, looking at his cattle, of any other task that takes him out of the household setting. This is an important distinction since if a man stays around the house he increases the probability that he will con-

273 757 other hand, one wishes to stop drinking, he will drink coca cola and leave the house.

Normally, a cure for a hangover, if it is not followed by more drinking, is successful in a one day time period. The length of a drinking performance can be computed as ceremonial 273 drinking plus informal drinking plus one day. If some symptons a 753 757 of the hangover continue on successive days, or if the hangover has unusual symptoms, individuals are alerted to the fact that the drinking performance is about to cause more serious consequences. There follow some text fragments in which the more 273 753 757 539 serious consequences are displayed and discussed by informants.

M. HA* YA HK'AN HTAMTIK RASON TY*L LIHK HATE X.HAL *IK TA SBAKEL HTATA I.

I want to ask the reason why my uncle's backache began.

D. *AX TA YOXEBAL HA*WIL, ME TA XCANEBAL HA*WIL HONC HATE LA STA E.

It began about three or four years ago.

PERE HUN TA TE ...TA K'AXIX ... TA XK'AXEL KUXEBAL YU*N *IP LEK YAKUB HONAX.

It seems that . . . a while ago . . . it was just after Holy Week, because he drank so much.

TONC BAZ'IL LAH YAK' HONC HATE HUN *U MA* BEN E.

For one month he couldn't walk, he really had it.

HUN LAH TA YU*N XIHIL TE* A YA*Y STUK TA YOK I.

It was as though there was a splinter in his foot.

273* YA YAK' HONC HU*N K'AS YU*N TONC YU'N HIC XKOTLAHAN YA X
753 LOK' E.
757
539 It hurt a lot. He had to crawl to go out.

YU*NEN TA TRAWO LA HTA XCI.

Perhaps I got it from the trago," he said.

YU*NEN POX YA SK'AN HONC YU*N AK' TAK'IN E XCI.

"Perhaps it needs medicine, if only there were some money," he said.

X TAL AWA*Y Z'IN E, LI* LA XBAHT TA SBAKEL I.

The next thing he knew, it was here in his back.

WOKOL STUK *IL TAT TONAX YU*N SZ'IKOHONC HEHK STUK TU*L TA *A*TEL I.

It's not a little that he suffers, especially as he is now a mayordomo.

M. MA*YUK YA YAK' SBAH TA POXTAYEL.

Isn't he being cured?

HA*YUN MA*K XCOHP.

That's why it's not getting better.

273* In this particular case, the illness being referred to
753 had already lasted three or four years, according to the text. The association of drinking with the onset of this illness was strong enough, then, to be remembered by the sick man's wife after a period of years.

273* In the following text fragment, we see another example
753 of this reasoning about the relationship between illness and
539 drinking.

273* M. HA* YA HLE HCAMEL YU*N *EHK YAKBEL I.
• 753
539 I looked for my illness in a big drunk.

LA KA*BE LEK.

I drank a lot.

YAN SOK MA*K WAN XLIHK HIC MA*K KUC'.

It's bad, and it wouldn't begin if I didn't drink.

HA* HATE YU*N MA* HUNUK NAX K'AHAL YA KUC' *EHK E.

It's because I don't drink for only one day.

YA YAC' HUN SEMNA HA* YUN TOHC TE....

I drink for a week, and that's the reason. . . .

MA*K XWE*ON SOK TAK HA* YUN ... TRAHO KUXULOH *A.

I don't eat with it, that's way . . . I live on trago.

HA* YU*N TE STIH HCAMEL Z'IN *A.

It's for this reason that the illness begins.

273* 753 In this example, not only do we see evidence for associating drinking with illness, but we also observe the particular type of drinking which caused the illness, namely drinking which goes on for a week. An associated feature of the drinking that caused Mariano to become sick, and that in general is perceived to cause illness, is that drinking and eating are usually mutually exclusive.

In the following remarks of Cirilo Hernandez we see further evidence of the association of illness with drinking.

273*
953
539 HIC MO TAXL K'AHAL E, TEMA* LAHIX HMA TAT E.

A few days ago, my father barely escaped dying.

*E K'UX C'UHTUL.

It was stomach ache.

HA BA YIC' TA K'OLAL YUN LA YUC' TRAWI.

He got sick because he drank aguardiente.

HUN *U LA YUC'.

He drank for a month.

TONAX YUN HA* *AN *EHK SME*L *INAM I, TONAX HUN *U SMIL SBA YUN TRAWO LI*I.

His wife left him and he killed himself drinking for a whole month.

TEMA* LAH.

He nearly died.

E SLA YO*TAN WAN.

It was from bitter anger and shame.

*AHTAL *O*TAN H*OLIL I, TEY YIHIX *ILI, TEY TRAWO NAX TAK LOM NAHT' LA YA*BE TRAWI.

On the one hand, it was from sadness; besides, he's already an old man, and he drank for a very long time.

K'AHAL *AHK'BAL, TONC *AY TA STI* HAL TRAWI XAHC TA SAK K'INAL YUC' XAHC TA SAK K'INAL YUC'.

Night and day, all that went into his mouth was trago; he started drinking as soon as he got up.

LA STOH LEK HONAX, K'O YA*Y HONC KUX HONC Z'IN I.

He paid plenty for it, he felt the effects a lot, he suffered a lot afterward.

273* KALBAT MA XAWUC'IX *A K'A KA*Y AKOMEL, HA* SNAEL TUT KAPAS
753 *ILI, XCUT.
539 I told him, "Don't go on drinking so much, you feel so bad because of your drinking," I said.

Again, in a text fragment of Juan Mendez:

J. LA *IL HA YUN K'IN I, KUC' KA*AL.

And then I drank during the fiesta.

K'AXAN K'IN NAXTAK I, HAL KA*BE XAN HUN TA KA* XAN HUN TA CE* XAN K'AHAL KA*BE XAN K'A XAN K'IN NAXTAK I, YUN MAYUNUK TRAWO STIHBON TAL MA *IK' Z'IN I.

After the fiesta, it seems to me that I drank for two days more. Don't you suppose that this rheumatism began because of the trago?

M. YUN *AY LOM K'UN HNUHKLELTIK *A HAYUN *ORA X TASWAN K'AHK' I.

Sometimes our body gets very weak and then we are taken with fever.

HTE* NAX TE*K MA *AY BA* HMAH HBAHTIK TA *IK', K'IXNAHEM HNUHKLELTIK *A E.

If our body is just a little hot, rheumatism will hit us. [Note: Aguardiente is believed to "heat" the body.]

273* 539 Extended drinking can cause fantastically frightening experiences. Jose Mendez describes one as follows:

J. HATE LIHK HONC *A TAT *ILI, LA HKUC' HC'IN KA*AL YU*N SK'IN SANTO.

It all began because I drank aguardiente on All Souls' Day.

KUC' HC'IN KA*AL *AY KA*TEL TA SNARYOS *A YU*N SLAHIB *ATEL *ABI TAT.

I drank because I was mayordomo--my last cargo.

273* 539 M. *A MA* BA YUC', HA* XANIX TEME YUN A SMAK TE*K E.

Ah, he hasn't drunk since. It's good if it stops him for a while.

I. *E HAYUN HIC A KAL, TEME SPAS TE*K POX TU*L A YUC' TATIK SEKRETARYI.

That's what I mean, if it works like the remedy the Secretary took.

*IPAL HA*WIL TE*K MA*K YUC' HAL A YUC'BE XPOXIL *ILE.

He hasn't drunk for many years, he took medicine.

M. HIC STUK *ILE HUH*U.

You're right about him.

HA* TONIX PERSA STUK C'IN POX LEHTIK (YUC'E)

Those of us who drink are very much interested in such a medicine.

273* 757 The general characteristics of the medicine for reducing the strength and number of one's drinking performances, as perceived by Aguacatenangueros, are the physical effects if one continues to drink after taking it. Illness and even death may be expected, as has been suggested in the texts cited. The medicine thus overrides all social and psychological "reasons" for drinking. One can tell whether or not the medicine is effective by attempting to continue to drink. If one wishes to drink and feels no unusually bad effects therefrom, it is clear that the medicine is not working.

273* 753 Aguardiente is illness-producing either directly because of its substance, or symbolically because it is one of the media

273 753 by means of which a witch causes his victim to ingest poisonous substances. In turn, the drinking of aguardiente is interpreted as a disease process to the extent that individuals take "medicine" to reduce the number of occasions upon which they drink. The text citations which have been inserted above are suggestive of these points. 273 By way of summing up this section, I would like to offer a less easily verifiable interpretation which provides still further context in terms of which the reader can think about the drinking performances in Aguacatenango. 273 183 [562] The first simple set of observations is as follows: Men drink and women don't. Some men drink more than others but all men must drink some. Some men would prefer to drink less than they do. Drinking settings for some men, especially under the informal drinking rules, are settings in which some considerable hostility is expressed. Suppose we take the case of the man who wishes to drink less. He can achieve this end in the short run by either drinking more or not drinking at all. He knows that he will not be able to completely terminate his drinking performances (the ceremonial drinking performances) until he is an old man. Ceremonial drinking performances are required of all men. He can, however, reduce the number of informal drinking performances. If a man wants to reduce the number of informal drinking performances, then, he can do so by increasing the average length of any particular informal drinking performance.

273* 183 [153] Increasing the length of an informal drinking performance increases the probability that the individual will become ill (as well as exhaust all his resources, anger the members of his household, and so on). Upon the next occasion when some individual invites him to start an informal drinking performance, he can respond by saying, "I am afraid to start an informal drinking performance with you since my style of informal drinking performance results for me in severe illness, alienates my family, causes economic catastrophe to my household." The person inviting must allow that this is true, in view of the fact that he observed ego engaging in such extended performances within the past year, say. On the other hand, an individual can stop engaging in informal drinking performances by reporting that he has taken medicine for drinking, which medicine will cause his death if he drinks. It is not unusual for a man to take medicine and then become very sick by way of telling the community that it was real medicine with strong disease producing effects. If a man goes on drinking in the informal drinking after he has taken the medicine, it is proof that the medicine did not have the desired effect. The common feature of either response to the desire to reduce amount of drinking: increasing the length of the informal drinking performances or taking medicine puts the individual in that context which allows him to say,

273* 183 "If I drink I will die." We believe that it is only by citing such severe effects as this that an individual can, over the long run, control his response to the invitation to drink.[1]

Some men prefer to drink more in the informal drinking performances than do most men. These men can increase number and length of informal drinking performances by seeking out the existing informal drinking groups on any particular day. The rule is that anyone may join any informal drinking group at the beginning of an informal drinking performance if, and only if, he can contribute a proportional amount of the aguardiente which is being drunk. It is the case that as an informal drinking group approaches deep drunkenness, it becomes easier for any man to join the informal drinking group without paying his proportional share of the drinking expenses.

273* 753 It appears to be the case, then, that individuals must get sick in order to reduce their number of informal drinking performances. Individuals also may get sick as the result of drinking under any circumstances. Long informal drinking performances allow individuals to behave as though they were ex-

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[1] In the short run, a man can avoid any particular, highly probable informal drinking performance by leaving the field, as was suggested above. That is, by knowing which days informal drinking performances are more likely to occur on than other days (the ten day time zone around some major fiesta, or Sundays, for example), he can arrange to be "away on business."

273* periencing strong aversive physical effects. It is likely that
753 individuals who wish to reduce the number of informal drinking performances manipulate the informal drinking segment length, because of standing beliefs about the relationship between drinking and illness. The only way a man can get out of his social obligations is to place himself in the special condition of being particularly prone to illness. Procedures for inducing illness are then likely to become strategies in controlling participation in informal drinking performances.

Aguardiente and curing

273* There is considerable variation in the use of aguardiente
755 in the curing ceremonies in Aguacatenango. Two classes of use may be distinguished. The first of these may be called medicinal use. The second class involves drinking by the participants of the curing ceremony other than the patient himself. These two classes of use may be relatively easily distinguished as follows: aguardiente as it is administered to the patient is generally mixed with other substances, although occasionally the curer will give the patient a straight draught of aguardiente. The participants (male, married drink deeply; all others drink an intermittent, non-intoxicating amount) on the other hand drink in the ceremonial drinking pattern. In violation of the cere-

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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ties to the center. They register births and deaths in the township center, but they do not have any representation in the cabildo. The populations have no identification with Indian subgroups, speak Spanish, and are oriented to the regional rather than the local economic center. The plantations remaining in the area, classified as *ranchos* in the national census, employ Indians from the center. Their only relationship to the central authority is to get help in recruiting additional laborers. Recruitment of labor is no longer coercive as it was prior to the 1930s when the low wage rate could not attract the help needed. Announcements of the need for workers are made by the president on the loudspeaker system of the town, and men voluntarily go to the plantations.

Spirit Domains

The link between people and place is through the media of the spirits (*ʔulelétik*) of persons and of locale. The relationship is maintained through a set of rules governing the behavior among spirits of people and of places. These rules derive from myths and stories of encounters which define the character of the spirits in each of the domains. Danger is localized in a series of caves which are avoided. Benevolent, or guardian, spirits inhabit a different set of sites, where ceremonies are conducted that maintain the well-being of the individual and of the community. By locating and circumscribing places of danger and guardianship, the members of the community can supplicate helpful spirits and avoid evil; they are delivered from fear of the unknown and provided with a rationale for dealing with fear of the known.

The places where spirits meet are outlined in Table 3. The first group includes spirits which are supplicated, the second, dangerous spirits which are avoided or approached only by powerful persons.

The house spirits. The spirits of inhabitants and of the house meet at the center post at the rear wall of the house. The spirit of the house lives in this post. Those who claim to have seen the house spirit say he is a small Ladino child. He is capricious, and if he is not happy, he may admit the evil spirits who will eat the souls of the inmates. His appe-

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

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342 tite must be satisfied when the house is first occupied and when the chil-
776 dren of the house fall ill from a sickness diagnosed by a curer as a result of
• 753 their souls being eaten. The souls of the inmates of the house hover near the center post when they are not in the body. The soul calling ceremony
342 is held near this center post. If someone is cured in a house not his own,
755 he must not sit near this post because his soul will be confused with those of the inmates of the house. The curing arch is erected directly before the center post, over the square hole in which the ceremonial offering of a sheep's head is buried when the house is built. A live chicken is buried in this spot if the illness is severe.

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778
769 TABLE 3. Spirits and Places

Place	*Place spirit*	*Person spirit*
Loci of spirits to be supplicated		
House	Spirit of the house (*sʔulel na*)	Spirits of children (*sʔuleletik yuntikil*)
Spring of San Nicolás	Little Ladino (*čʔin kaxlan*)	Spirits of male patients (*sʔuleletik yuʔun keremetik*)
Spring of Pahaltón	Little Ladina (*čʔin lixlan*)	Spirits of female patients (*sʔuleletik yuʔun ʔaʔiletik*)
Cave of Ancestors	Lopez brothers (*Šuntonetik*)	Spirits of townspeople (*sʔuleletik spisil teklum*)
Loci of spirits to be avoided		
Cave of Don David	Ladino moneylender (*Klabil*)	Petitioners for wealth
Cave of the Black Man	Devil, or black man (*ʔihkʔal winik*)	Witches
Cave of Juan Santos	Deceased recipient of wealth from Cave Hwan Santil	Petitioners for wealth
Stone Cave	Owner of cave (*Yahwal sʔen*)	Petitioners for wealth
Cave of Elotes	Owner of cave (*Yahwal sʔen*)	Petitioners for wealth
Cave of the Star	Owner of star (*Yahwal ʔekʔ*)	Curers and witches

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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I can get one then. Last year I bought a transistor radio for nine hundred and ninety pesos. My wife said she would leave me if I got it because all
[053] the children would get sick. But I got it anyway and no one was sick. I am stronger than my enemies."

Innovation on the consumption level is adding a stimulus to innovation in economic activities. The successful innovator must invent a rationale for his improved standards of living and then prove that he can survive the possible evil consequences of envy. The process of adoption is one of a shift in the incidence of choices made in the direction of improving levels of living. The new is often incorporated with the old rather than replacing
[252] it. For example, after the rough preparation has been done with the mill, grinding stones are used for the final grinding of corn to get the dough
[415] into the preferred consistency for making tortillas. Tin plates are used along with crockery and gourds. Some items are linked in change: for ex-
[291] ample, tailored pants are worn only with buttoned shirts and belts and
[096] with zippered jackets. The old forms are continued in a ceremonial con-
[415] text: kotonču is preferred when a man undertakes an official role, and gourds are preferred to any other container for ceremonial foods. The technology of production lags behind the changes in consumption that have increased the need for greater income—agricultural tools have not been modified since the colonial period when the wooden plow, metal hoe, machete, and plow used with draft animals were added. Changes in consumption needs rather than in productive technology are expanding the economic horizons of the Indians.

Choices and Strategies in Agricultural Production

241 In agricultural and pottery production, decision-making concerning the use of land and labor resources is controlled not only by a traditional technology but more importantly by a given state of cognitive orientations that determines, in Goodenough's words (1966:54), "what states of affairs they have learned to discern, what they believe to be the relations between them, and what they understand to be the processes by which one state can be transformed into another." Agriculturalists have a fine perception

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970

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844 house, and the men usually leave the scene. Women are ashamed of their husbands seeing the afterbirth because they joke about it with other men. [522 833] (I do not know what the joking is about—possibly it is related to the frequency of sexual intercourse during pregnancy, since the placenta is believed to be increased by male sperm.)

There is no ceremony attending childbirth. Although some women are assisted by one female relative, most call in a midwife, who is referred to as "grandmother of the child" and who comes when the birth pangs [959] begin. There is only one recognized midwife in Tzo'ontahal; she is the sister of one of the practicing curers and a niece of one of the former leading curers of Alannantik. She has patients on both sides of the dual division. On rare occasions, caused by witchcraft the Indians believe, a woman [845 756] fails to give birth after two or three days of labor, and then a curer is called in.

The child is delivered with the mother kneeling on the floor. The midwife cuts the umbilical cord with a knife, and the child's navel is tied with a cord. The child is wrapped in cloths which have been smoked over incense, and then a woman's sash is wrapped around him from shoulders to feet, firmly binding the arms and legs so that they cannot move. It is felt that if this is not done, the child will snatch at everything and eventually 846 become a thief. The body remains bound in this way for fifteen days. The umbilical cord and placenta are buried in the houseyard. Some say that a boy's umbilical cord may be tied in a tree "so that when the child grows, he can climb trees and cut fruit." The mother is given a drink of coffee, and the midwife binds her stomach with a band. Three days later the woman enters the sweatbath to cleanse herself. The midwife goes in with her and rubs her with branches of orange leaves and massages her stomach. If the child is born away from his own house, he is brought to it with great care so that his soul will not be dislodged from his body. The midwife makes a pad with branches of bushes growing near the springs, and the father sprays the child's body with springwater from his mouth.

[753] In the first "twenty days or one month" of life, the child's contacts with the world are limited to the immediate family in order to guard against soul-loss and illness from "hot" glances of outsiders. When anyone not of the household approaches the house in which there is a newborn child, he

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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The funeral procession leaves for the cemetery about three in the afternoon. Attending the body are the padrinos, parents, aunts, and uncles. If the deceased is a child under two years of age, he is carried by his madrina. One of the former fiscales or someone who knows how to pray goes along. Smaller siblings or children of the dead are left at home with the maliwanehetik, who in this case are chosen from among the more distant relatives, compadres, and neighbors not attending the funeral. As they walk, the women cry and the "owner of the dead," the woman closest of kin, wails constantly in the stylized mourning cry. She stops wailing only when the company stops to pray at the cross at the exit of the town and just before entering the graveyard. At each resting point, the fiscal, who holds a rosary, reads the prayer book, while a neighbor or compadre uses a geranium to sprinkle holy water on the spot. An older male relative holds a palm cross.

When the party arrives at the opened grave, the godmother sits down near the coffin to make the final arrangements. The grave has been opened prior to the arrival of the party, but sometimes the men widen the hole. If they come across a bone, the fiscal shakes holy water over it with the geranium. When a nursing child is buried, the mother leans over the coffin and puts her breast in the child's mouth just before he is lowered into the grave. This is done so that the child's spirit will not think any longer of returning. The godparent or some other attendant dips the geranium in water and shakes it over the body. Handfuls of dirt are then thrown into the coffin. It is at this point that the assembled group, including the men, breaks into loud wails. The wails of the funeral party, though they do not lack feeling, are most important as a controlled communication, uttered when it is appropriate and by particular persons who are expected to cry before a select audience.

As the neighbors who have come to help the bereaved relatives shovel dirt on the grave, the padrino of the deceased approaches the fiscal and recites the pat'o'tan of blessing for the gift of liquor. The liquor is measured in a shot glass and passed around to the company. The women leave soon, and the men remain drinking. At this point a kind of trial is held to see who is responsible for the death. Since almost all sickness is believed to be caused by witchcraft, it is important to decide who the guilty person

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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might be. The father or closest male kin of the dead person is careful to recount all the consultations he has had with curers, both to absolve himself of the guilt of neglect or unconscious witchcraft and to search for the true culprit.

A proper burial with holy water, flowers, grave offerings, and prayers assures the survivors that the soul of the deceased will rest and his bones will lie in peace. Lacking any of these features, the dead will disturb the living, as is recounted below:

During the revolution, many were buried without a funeral or without blessed water. On Thursday, the bones burn and cry. You can still see a blue flame rising above the old graveyard on Thursday. You can find money that the ancestors left there, but you have to go at night to dig it up.

An important safeguard to ensure that the soul will lie in peace is burial among people with whom the deceased lived. When a married adult dies, he is buried with his dead spouse. If he had two dead spouses, he is buried with the first spouse on the right hand and the second on the left. A child is buried with the grandparents of the household in which he lived—that is, if he lived with his mother's parents he is buried with them, and if with the father's parents, then with them. When people know that they are going to die, they express their preference as to where they wish to be buried. Usually they will elect to be buried between their dead parents, but if they were unhappy with their parents, they might choose a padrino or uncle. If dissatisfied in its resting place, a soul, even when properly buried, cannot find peace and wanders back to the house. Fearing this, relatives try to comply with the wishes of the dead.

My grandfather used to say that he wanted to be buried between his mother and father. But when he was about to die, he said, "I don't want to be buried there because my father beat me. He will continue beating my soul. I want to go on the side [of the cemetery]. Please don't bury me near my parents." My father said, "All right, we will put you on the side."

The funeral must meet the expectations of the community as well as those of the deceased and his relatives. The mature children of a man who

Chapter 6

Curing and the Curers

Sickness is a sign of upset relations between the spirits or people and those of relatives, neighbors, or places. In the curing ritual, the curers not only treat the disease, but also try to bring about spiritual readjustment by dramatizing the ill effects of animosity. Because they claim to be able to counteract witchcraft, the curers exercise a great deal of power. This power is limited by institutional requirements controlling entry into the profession and exercise of their skill and knowledge. The breakdown in the authority of elder curers during my study of the community, and their attempts to reinstate themselves, made explicit some of the structural principles of the institution.

The Curing Hierarchy

Recruitment into the hierarchy. Until the 1950s, each side of the dual division had an age-ranked order of curers and recognized the leadership of a single elder, called *statal ʔuʔul.* The older, more experienced curers, called the *b'ankilal,* or elder brothers, had authority over the novice curers, called the *ʔihtz'inal,* or younger brothers. With the breakdown of the hierarchy during my stay, this distinction was becoming less clear. In 1964 there were seven curers in Alannantik and six in Ahk'olnantik; on a return visit I made in 1967, their numbers had been reduced by homicide and exile to five in Alannantik and five in Ahk'olnantik.

Entry into the profession occurs during an epidemic when the civil authority calls upon the curers to gather in the town hall to determine who is bringing the "heat" that causes death from disease. The curers decide whether there are any promising young men who have the third soul, swayohel, which gives them the ability to cure. If a young man is deemed

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

boring community who is reputed to practice both witchcraft and curing receives fees of 200 to 300 pesos regularly. She has been accused of killing more than one patient in giving injections.

Since most diseases are not static conditions, a master classification must take into account physiological process. The only absolutely evil diseases are those which are found to be incurable. When diseases which start out as apparently "good," or not caused by evil intent, fail to respond to patent medicines, the patient or his family begin to suspect witchcraft. They then turn to the curer who will diagnose this. Category 1 of Table 22 includes those diseases which, depending on duration and intensity, indicate the presence of evil.

In the case of the illnesses of God, Category 3 of Table 22, an additional complication enters. As in the case of Category 1 diseases, they may begin as "good" diseases, but the introduction of evil by a witch means that the illness can cause death to many people. This category includes the contagious diseases, the most common ones being measles, whooping cough, and heat, which may refer to typhoid, grippe, or to an increase in the virulence of other contagious diseases.

The designation "sickness of God" is one inspired by the priest. He has been active in trying to discourage witch-killing and has insisted that the contagious diseases are sent by God. The villagers have accepted this as far as the origin of the disease is concerned, but as the deaths mount, people begin to suspect witchcraft.

Sudden attacks causing almost immediate death are classified as judgments of the ancestors rather than as illness. These include "seizure, because the very cold leg and arm of the ancestors touch the body [of the victim]" and "ancestors grab the soul." Asphyxiation and heart attack may be some of the modern classifications for such diseases. If a child should die suddenly, the logic applied in Tzo?ontahal is that the *me?iltatil kananatay lum,* the mother-father ancestors who care for earth, see a potential danger in the soul of the child and seize it so that he will not develop into a witch. These are the only deaths I know of which are not attributed to witchcraft.

?t Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
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The Logic of Curing

Diagnosis of illness in Tzo?ontahal is a kind of checklisting against a native taxonomic hierarchy of disease (Frake 1963). The curer is concerned primarily with establishing whether the illness is evil or good, secondarily whether cold or hot, and his prestige depends upon his ability to classify the disease at these highest levels of contrast.

In questioning the meaning of each act, I encountered no hesitation in giving answers, as I have in investigating other performances. Each act is understood in terms of the part its plays in the diagnosis and curing of the patient, and is in turn tied into a cognitive reference scheme which takes into account the patient's relations with kin and neighbors, environmental conditions, and the state of the patient's constitution. The notion of process underlying the classification of diseases explains some apparent contradictions in behavior. Good illness may so weaken the patient that he is vulnerable to the invasion of evil, and the tactic must shift to counter witchcraft. The alternation of chills and fever means that cold medicines must be administered followed by hot. The curer maintains communication with the blood in frequent pulsing to check whether he has overcome the evil and to ascertain what the blood wants.

The logical premises underlying diagnosis can be summarized as follows: Social relationships are primary causes of illness, while the conditions of the environment, such as cold wind or rain in which the patient gets drenched, provide conditions favorable to the entry of the disease. The effect of the evil projected depends upon the condition of the patient. Thus a mature adult may have the internal resistance to reject disease, while children, the aged, or women after childbirth are more vulnerable. Accidental wounds may render the victim more vulnerable to witchcraft as well as to "sickness of God." The malefactor achieves his goal if any member of the household or even a chicken or cow of the person against whom he has a grudge falls ill.

The emphasis on the origin of illness means that the study of symptoms is of little significance. People involved in some conflict may define themselves as patients or be defined as such by their intimate social group even without having any apparent physical illness. Sometimes a colicky baby

Sometimes a colicky baby may become the focus of a curing ceremony designed to "cure" the conflict between husband and wife. In one case, the parents of a healthy young wife separated from her husband staged a curing ceremony to dramatize her marital plight to the in-laws.

The breakdown of the curing hierarchy and the recruitment procedures which were maintained by the elder leaders (see Chapter 10) has led to a reevaluation of the role of the curers in the community. They have lost their position as me'iltatil representing the ancestors who guard over the community. Curers are increasingly being accused of sorcery, and over ten of them have been killed in the past decade as witches (Nash, J. 1967). Paradoxically, it is the belief in their evil power which leads to their persisting role in the society. Clients feel that the more evil the curer is, the more able he is to combat evil. In a community dominated by belief in witchcraft, they are both feared and valued for their ability to control it. From a position as arbiters of morality, they have become the chief targets as deviants from the moral code. Despite the loss of confidence in curers as guardians, they are still called upon to fight the evil of witchcraft, and nearly every day a ritual is performed. The regimen of the curing ritual has not been upset by the undermining of the curers' position. Tied to a diagnostic system emphasizing the state of the patient's social relations, the same procedures are carried out even when modern medicines are used.

In curing practices, the Indian sees himself as the key figure in the drama of his own self-victimization. His illnesses come from within his own world, usually from within his family or close neighborhood. They are a mark of guilt for having excited the envy or hatred of associates. While the Indian is often portrayed in the role of passive victim to outside domination, in his own self-projection he sees himself dominated by powers within the community. Greater participation and equality in the wider society may in the future release him from these fear-provoking figures in his own environment.

626 556 the few economic alternatives offered to an Indian who wants to live an Indian life among other Indians, in peace. In this sense, Amatenangueros and Aguacatecos are no "penny capitalists" of the type described by Sol Tax (1953). But it is also true that, like the Panajachel Indians, they desire to have more for themselves and their children: money for security against sickness, death, [146] bad crops and other misfortunes. They also want better clothing, more meat in their diet (the amount of animal protein in their diet is extremely small by western standards) and small extra luxuries which have been introduced into their culture, little by little, by the local Ladino merchants: flashlights, mirrors, etc.

627 556 754 [731] Nevertheless, a wealthy man brings upon himself the antagonism of the other villagers, who, in search of a scapegoat during times of stress (such as a village epidemic) would not hesitate to accuse the rich man of being responsible for bringint the misfortune to the town because of his evil spirit, nor hesitate to kill him. Even if people find a man has a good crop, somebody can assume that, because his own crop failed, the other man has "stolen" the soul of his corn or if a man receives a large inheritance, somebody could accuse him of having killed (by witchcraft) the relative from who he inherited it. It takes a good deal of diplomatic skill and a strong control of the sources of gossip to manage to [753] keep oneself clear of such accusations. On the other hand, villagers are afraid of showing excessive wealth (according to community standards) unless they bring upon themselves the other face of witchcraft: supernatural sickness produced by envy. Even

629 556 754 a man in good standing, if he has too many goods or money, may fear witchcraft because he "knows" that he is a good target for the envy of those who, possessing powerful and evil souls (nahuales), decide to bewitch him and make him sick or kill his children or ruin his next crop.

626 754 Thus, the belief in witchcraft operates at two levels: on the one hand the individual lives according to community norms so that he won't be accused of being a witch. On the other hand he lives according to community norms so that he cannot be bewitched.

754 Because witches attack supernaturally, sending out their animal souls while their human body is asleep, it is not possible to know, for certain, the originator of the sickness nor to protect oneself or others from its powers. There are no sorcery spells to counteract it, but people "know" that witches can, sometimes, put "bad medicines" into drinks while a man is drunk or leave little sticks on the road for the victim to step on and acquire the disease which has been sent because of envy. Everybody denies knowing how to bewitch, but everybody suspects others of being able to do it.

[753] One result of this set of beliefs is that the etiology of disease is thought of as being supernatural. Other misfortunes are also explained in metaphysical terms. Sickness is always present in the village, misfortunes do occur which cannot be predicted, and the villager "experiences," then, the effects of witchcraft in everyday life. Therefore, the threat of supernatural

882 562 584 session in Church). Water carrying is associated with courting, and the bachelors stay around the paths that connect the houses of their [redacted]sethearts with the well to which they go to fetch water, expecting to receive some indication of acceptance on their part, and if they are literate, to hand them a love letter. Girls, on these occasions, are expected to behave modestly and to be embarrassed. If not, they are usually judged as alocadas (lightheaded) and not fit for marriage.

156 571 The concept of tener su compañía runs throughout all activity, at all ages. Having company means protection from the supernatural on a long trip, help around the house, harmonious social relations with age mates and kinsmen, and insurance against loneliness. Older women who are left alone in a house for several days will "borrow" a younger girl, a son's daughter for example, to keep them company, and a young wife going to market or to get firewood is usually expected to find company to do so. If not, she can well meet a strange man on the road, and get sick from [153] verguenza (sickness assumed to originate from shame at being placed in an anomalous or embarrassing social situation) or espanto (fear and soul loss).

882 562 [868] Boys (kerem and tek' el) do not have as many restrictions of behavior or of movement as girls after puberty, but they are also expected to have their company. They start working with their fathers around the age of ten, depending on their physical strength, but in the beginning, it is not a serious occupation. 883 562 573 As soon as they become regular workers, they spend their free time with other bachelors and form a compañía or escuadrilla

8: Hunt E-4,5 (1958)1962 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango
Aguacatenango

TABLE 5

HOUSE TYPES IN AMATENANGO[a]

184
342

Type	Cases	Per Cent
Roof		
Tile	1	1
Shingle	28	24
Thatch	87	75
Wall		
Wattle-and-daub	97	84
Rough Boards	19	16

[a]After Nash, J.: 1959.

342 Houses are a part of the family. They are considered as being alive (they grow old, just as people do) and watching the behavior of humans, toward whom they are somewhat unfriendly. If they are displeased with the behavior of the inhabitants, they can bring nightmares to the adults, death to the children and other misfortunes. Calixta Guiteras-Holmes (1960) has suggested that houses are ideologically connected with the earth, whom one has to please if crops are going to grow steadily, and to the monte (forested hills), where the wood for its construction is gathered. [118] Thus, because the monte is the residence of the evil spirits, enemies of mankind, the house is a projection of this malevolent world.

342 753 571 578 Even more significant is the house ritual connected with the sickness of a person who lives in it. It is significant

342 753 571 578 because sickness is considered a supernatural expression of disturbed social relations, and this is considered disruptive, not only for the people who inhabit a single dwelling, but also for the building which symbolizes their common residence and interests. As long as the relations of people living in a house are harmonious, the house is kept contented. But if this is not so, both the people and the building have to be ritually cleaned. For example, if a daughter disobeys her mother, she is considered to be suffering from bilis or cólico, and in need of curing. During the curing ceremony, the sick misbehaver has to be instructed about her duties as a good daughter, and is given a speech apropos the misdemeanor. The curing ceremony is not completed if the house is not ritually cured, too. This is done by a curer offering the building some trago, the local brew, asking it to be contented. This offering is then symbolic of both the re-establishment of normal social relations between the individuals living in the house, and between the individuals and their material projection, their house.

342 753 578 782 The people living in a household are in charge of performing some other rituals which are expected to insure the welfare of the whole group.

A small altar, usually made of a pine table, is kept in the house. It is covered with Catholic Saints' images and printed religious calendars. The table also contains all kinds of other things: petty cash (which is kept there for small purchases), double corncobs (which are "lucky pieces") or unusually colored maize, and any other oddity found by the household members, such